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Letter dated 4 January from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to convey to you herewith a concept paper for the Security Council debate on "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security", to be held on 13 January 2010.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

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Annex to the letter dated 4 January 2010 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

China's concept paper

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in maintaining international peace and security

1. Introduction

The Charter of the United Nations assigns primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security to the Security Council. In Chapter VIII of the Charter, the founding Members of the United Nations, with great vision, also encouraged the development of pacific settlement of local disputes through regional arrangements. World peace and development are now faced with many difficulties and challenges, and it is imperative to respond to them forcefully and collectively at the national, regional and international levels. In a rapidly changing world, strengthening cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations will both promote multilateralism and boost the international collective security mechanism.

China takes the opportunity of its presidency of the Security Council in January 2010 to convene a thematic debate to explore ideas and measures for strengthening the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. This debate will build on the past thematic debates of the Security Council to review how best to maximize the relationship between the United Nations and regional organizations. Past resolutions, presidential statements of the Security Council and relevant reports of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations can be of useful reference.

The format of the meeting will be a debate of the Security Council. Members of the Security Council are expected to join the discussions on both conceptual and practical issues. Representatives of relevant regional organizations will be invited to address the debate and to share with the Council their latest experiences in the maintenance of international peace and security and their views and proposals on how to further strengthen the relations between the United Nations and regional organizations.

2. Areas to be explored

In addition to reviewing progress made, the debate may focus on, but not be limited to, the following issues:

(1) In view of the complex nature of disputes, conflicts, threats and challenges faced by the international community, what are the comparative advantages of the United Nations and regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security, in particular in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts? How can their respective roles and responsibilities be better defined in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations?

(2) Regional organizations vary among each other in terms of their mandate, institutional structure, overall capacities in maintaining peace and security and the specific situations in their respective region. What are the appropriate approaches that can better serve the purpose of enhancing interaction and cooperation between the United Nations, in particular the Security Council, and regional organizations and of forming synergies?

(3) A collaborative partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations is crucial in the effective prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. How can the advantages of regional organizations, including early warning mechanisms, be best utilized to enable early responses to disputes and emerging crises, and to encourage the countries concerned in the region to resolve differences and problems peacefully through dialogue, reconciliation, negotiation, good offices and mediation?

(4) Taking into account the surging needs for United Nations peacekeeping operations, and building upon the achievements of Security Council debates on support to African Union peacekeeping operations authorized by the United Nations, what are the additional measures that the United Nations and regional organizations may undertake to respond collaboratively to situations in pressing need of deployment of blue helmets?

(5) How can regional and subregional organizations be more closely involved in peacebuilding, post-conflict stabilization and reconstruction processes, including through the framework of the Peacebuilding Commission?

3. Expected outcomes

The Security Council is expected to adopt a presidential statement as an outcome of the debate.